Good wishes to President of Nepal

†678.SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:
SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government did not extend its good wishes to the new President of Nepal early;

(b) whether it is being alleged that India had endeavoured for who should be the President;

(c) whether it is a fact that at the time of termination of Hindu State, India was first to congratulate; and

(d) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The President of Nepal was sworn in on July 23, 2008. A message of congratulations from our President was conveyed to the Nepalese President the same day.

(b) Government are of the view that it is for the people of Nepal to decide the manner in which they wish to be governed.

(c) and (d) No. Do not arise.

Visit to PM of Nepal

679. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister of Nepal has, recently, visited India and held discussions with his counterpart and other prominent leaders on several issues;

(b) if so, the details of discussions held and outcome thereof;

(c) whether any assurance has been given by the Prime Minister of Nepal to wipe out camps of terrorists and Maoists in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) Yes. The newly elected Prime Minister of Nepal visited India from September 14-18, 2008. During the visit, the entire gamut of bilateral relationship came up for discussions. It was decided to reactivate bilateral mechanisms with Nepal including those in water resources, trade and transit and security issues. Both sides have agreed to enhance cooperation in handling cross-border crime and security concerns.

The text of the Joint Press Statement issued during the visit is enclosed.

Joint Press Statement on official visit of Rt. Hon'ble Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', Prime Minister of Nepal to India (14-18 September 2008).

The Rt. Hon'ble Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', Prime Minister of Nepal, is on an official visit to India from September 14-18, 2008 at the invitation of H.E. Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.